



2010

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Recommended Citation (OVERRIDE)

Atwood, C. P. (2010). The Notion of Tribe in Medieval China: Ouyang Xiu and the Shatuo Dynastic Myth. In D. Aigle, I. Charleux, V. Goossaert, & R. Hamayon (Eds.), *Miscellanea Asiatica: Festschrift in Honour of Francoise Aubin* (pp. 593-621). Sankt Augustin: Institute Monumenta Serica.

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Disciplines

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Comments

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THE NOTION OF TRIBE IN MEDIEVAL CHINA

Ouyang Xiu and the Shatuo Dynastic Myth¹

CHRISTOPHER P. ATWOOD

One cannot write a history of the steppe peoples north of China without the word “tribes” coming up in some form. The utility of this term, what it “ought” to mean (if anything), and how it came to pervade European and American anthropology has been a major subject of study. This research has paid great attention to the Middle East and Africa.² Much less scrutiny has been given to the terminologies treated as the native equivalents of the concept of tribe in East Asia and the Central Eurasian steppe. Yet in translations from Mongolian, Tibetan, and above all Chinese into European languages, the term “tribe” is firmly ensconced. Any doubt about whether the societies of China’s neighbors under the Han 漢 dynasty, for example, were “tribal” in nature could be easily resolved for the non-Chinese speaking reader by a quick perusal of Burton Watson’s widely used translations of Sima Qian’s 司馬遷 *Shiji* 史記, where the word tribe appears in abundance.

Yet in reality, neither of the binomes or two character combinations, commonly used in Chinese as equivalent for the anthropologists’ “tribe,” i.e., *buluo* 部落 or *buzu* 部族, had yet been coined in the time of Sima Qian, or indeed for centuries after. All of the “tribes” found in translations of Sima Qian’s *Shiji* or Ban Gu’s 班固 *Hanshu* 漢書, famous for their accounts of the Xiongnu 匈奴, archetypal nomads of the eastern steppe, have been inserted by the translators.³ The binome *buluo* only came into use in

¹ It is an honor for me to present this small piece of research in homage to Françoise Aubin. Although this paper is on a period of the Sino-nomadic interaction somewhat earlier than that on which she made her great mark, it is my hope that it will be a tribute to my appreciation of her sociological and historical writings. I would also like to record my gratitude to the staff and colleagues at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton for providing truly idyllic conditions for research during the time when most of the research for this paper was done in 2006–2007. My stipend during this time was funded by a generous grant from the Starr Foundation.

² See the influential discussion in Fried, *The Notion of Tribe*, the essays in Khoury and Kostiner, *Tribes and State Formation in the Middle East*, and Sneath, *The Headless State*.

³ In Burton Watson’s translation of Sima Qian, in *Records of the Grand Historian*:

the second or third century CE, and after it was coined, it was not used for true steppe nomads until the fourth century CE at the earliest. The binome *buzu* is even later and is not attested before the Five Dynasties period in the tenth century (its origin will be discussed below).

Indeed whether the word “tribe” properly conveys the meaning of the word *buluo* is questionable. In one sense it is clearly equivalent: like the word “tribe” and its cognates in English, French, and other European languages, *buluo* is used solely for divisions within polities that are seen as less civilized and unequal to the center (in this case, China). Yet the connotations of *buluo* are quite different from those of “tribe” in the anthropological literature. As Adam Kuper and David Sneath have shown, the current connotations of the term “tribe” in European languages stem from a vision of “primitive society” developed by nineteenth century sociologists and anthropologists. In this vision, society was kin-based rather than territory-based, segmentary rather than functionally organized, corporate rather than individual in its property relations, and relatively unstratified by wealth.⁴ The contemporary tribe is thus a case of arrested development in human history. Of all these features it was the supposedly kin-based nature of “tribal society” which drew the most attention, fostering a whole sub-field of kinship studies and anthropological debates over descent and alliance theory.

As seen in the first several centuries of Chinese imperial ethnography (i.e., up to the Tang dynasty), however, the Chinese term *buluo* carried very different connotations. Of the two characters forming the binome, *bu* 部 was used in the sense of a body of armed men, a military (or bandit) unit un-

Han Dynasty, for example, the word “tribe” is inserted frequently in the account of the Xiongnu and the Southwestern Barbarians without any real basis in the Chinese original. In most cases, the word “tribe” has been added as an English classifier to what in Chinese is a simple ethnonym. In other cases, the alteration of meaning is more drastic. For example, in vol. 2, p. 129, the Chinese *zi junwang yi xia* 自君王以下 “from the lords and princes on down” (*SJ*, 110/2879) is translated “from the chiefs of the tribe on down” and on pp. 129-130 (*SJ*, 110/2879), the Chinese *gui zhuangjian, jian laoruo* 貴壯健，賤老弱 “they honor those who are strong and healthy and despise the old and weak” is translated “the tribe honours those who are young and strong and despises the weak and aged.” On p. 253, the phrase *jie Di lei ye* 皆氏類也, “all of them are of the Di 氏 type” is translated as “All of them belong to the Di tribe.” On p. 2237 and 2241 (*SJ*, 123/3166 and 123/3170) *Xinan Yi* 西南夷 “Southwest Barbarians (or aliens)” is translated as “tribes in the area” or “barbarian tribes.” The arbitrariness of these insertions of this language of “tribes” is accentuated by the fact that the term “tribe” is *not* inserted into the translation of the chapters on the oasis people of Central Asia or the proto-Korean kingdom of Chaoxian 朝鮮 – again without any basis in a distinction in the Chinese original.

⁴ Kuper, *The Invention of Primitive Society*; Sneath, *The Headless State*.

der one leader. *Luo* 落 was meant in the sense of a sedentary or semi-sedentary small village or large camp. (Only later was the term applied to nomads.) The *buluo* is indeed seen as different from Chinese administrative units, but the ethnographic descriptions associated with the earliest use of these terms highlight not the idea of kinship (vs. territoriality) or common (vs. individual) property, but the fusion of military leadership with civil leadership. Thus the peacetime village was the wartime band; one man was both peacetime judge and wartime commander. Together, these give *buluo* the sense of "militia settlement" or "local following (of armed men)." Not only is there no implication that the members of the *buluo* are united by kinship, even fictively, but the earliest recorded peoples divided by Chinese sources into *buluo*, the Wuhuan 烏桓 (Avars) and Xianbei 鮮卑 (Serbi), are explicitly said to have no stable kin-groups, forming their "surnames" (*xing* 姓) around prominent leaders, and recognizing both matrilineal and patrilineal affiliations.

During the Five Dynasties period (907–960), however, a new term came into use reflecting a new conception of barbarian society as based on descent groups: *buzu*. Combining the word *bu* "unit," "division" with *zu* 族 "descent group," this new term, which is still widely used in Chinese today, combined the idea of a "local following" or "militia settlement" with that of a clan or patrilineal descent group. The Yuan 元-era editors of the *Liaoshi* 遼史 (*History of the Liao Dynasty*) in their chapter on the *buzu* of the Kitan 契丹 people's Liao 遼 dynasty (907–1125) expressed the meaning of this binome thus:

The *buluo* ("local following") is called *bu* ("followings") and *shizu* 氏族 ("descent group")⁵ is called *zu* ("clan"). The ancient custom of the Kitans was to divide up the land for dwelling places and to bring together the clans for residences. There were clans which were treated as followings such as the Five Courts and the Six Courts.⁶ There were followings which were treated as clans such as the Qai kings (*Xiwang* 奚王) and the

⁵ *Shizu* is defined as identical to *zongzu* 宗族 in Luo Zhufeng (ed.), *Hanyu da cidian*, vol. 6, s.v. *shi* 氏 (p. 1419); *zongzu* is usual translated as "descent group" by writers on Chinese kinship history, e.g., Ebrey, "The Early Stages in the Development of Descent Group Organization": 25. The fact that it also can be used to designate the actual genealogy of such a group (*zongzu puxi* 宗族譜系) indicates that it is thought to be founded on traceable descent.

⁶ These were collateral branches of the imperial family, which Abaoji 阿保機, founder of the Kitan empire, reorganized into administrative units under *irkins* 夷離革. See Wittfogel and Fêng, *History of Chinese Society*: 87, 191–192; Holmgren, "Marriage, Kinship and Succession under the Ch'i-tan Rulers": 51–52.

Shiwei (*Shiwei* 室韋).⁷ There were followings which were not treated as clans such as the Telitemian 特里特勉, the Shaowa/Šawa 稍瓦 and Hezhu/Xaču 曷朮⁸; there were clans which were not treated as followings such as the nine yurts of the Yaolian 遙輦⁹ and the three patriarchal houses¹⁰ of the imperial lineage.¹¹

The *buzu* was a major administrative term under the Kitan Liao and the Yuan editors evidently wished to be exact in their understanding of its meaning. They were well aware of the distinction between social groups, particularly residential groups, which was what a *buluo* “local following” was, and kin categories, such as the *shizu*, which did not necessarily live together and might not be a residential unit. This passage carefully distinguishes cases where the residence groups were based on kinship and when they were not, although what exactly the priority of the residence group or the descent group meant in any particular case is not explicitly defined. Although the term *buzu* was being used loosely for a wide variety of social formations, it was, in the strict sense at least, intended to designate a group which joined common residence and descent. It is thus remarkably close to the nineteenth-twentieth century anthropological meaning of tribe or clan as a unit held together by kin or quasi-kin ties.

The Kitan Liao was not the only regime to use the term *buzu*. The Kitan formed their Liao dynasty in Northeast China at the same time as Li Keyong 李克用 (856–908) was building his barbarian Shatuo 沙陀 army into the core

⁷ The Qai and the Shiwei were tributary ethnic groups to the south and north of the Kitans, respectively. Paul Pelliot and Edwin Pulleyblank reconstructed Shiwei as Shirbi or Shirvi; this in turn may be plausibly linked to the reconstructed Kitan **sirbi* “slave”; see Shimunek, “Towards a Reconstruction of the Kitan Language”: 94.

⁸ These were units formed as garrisons; the Telitemian originated from the original subjects of the Kitan founder. The Shaowa and the Hezhu were garrisons formed of drafted slaves; see Wittfogel and Fêng, *History of Chinese Society*: 89. The employments of the Shaowa and Hezhu are indicated by their names: Shaowa being Kitan *šawa* “bird,” i.e., falconers, and Hezhu being Kitan **xaču* “iron,” i.e., blacksmiths; see Shimunek, “Towards a Reconstruction of the Kitan Language”: 92, 100.

⁹ The Yaolian was the larger ruling house of which the imperial Yelü/Yila 耶律 ~ 移剌 was one lineage. See Holmgren, “Yeh-lü, Yao-lien and Ta-ho”: 56–63.

¹⁰ These were the subjects and descendants of Abaoji’s brothers and uncles; on their organization, see Wittfogel and Fêng, *History of Chinese Society*: 191–192; Holmgren, “Marriage, Kinship and Succession under the Ch’i-tan”: 50–52.

¹¹ *LS*, 32/376; cf. Wittfogel and Fêng, *History of Chinese Society*: 84–85. Wittfogel and Fêng’s translation and interpretation suffers somewhat from not recognizing that the point of the introduction is to explain the meaning of *buzu* in terms of two previous binomes: *buluo* and *shizu*.

of a new dynasty in today's Datong 大同-Höhhöt area. Both the Shatuo and the Kitan Liao were competing to inherit the legacy of the Tang 唐 dynasty which had disintegrated in the great rebellions of the Qianfu 乾符 era (874–879). Likewise, both used the term *buzu* in their official writings. Their common use of the *buzu* terminology and its spread to become the standard terminology for non-Han Chinese peoples from the tenth century on thus indicated a new conception, on the part of Chinese historians and border experts, of barbarian society as being based in some sense on local lineages.

How did this new identification of “primitive society” as kin-based occur, almost exactly a millennium before it was to happen in Europe? Was it the result of increasing Chinese knowledge of her neighbors? Or had the social structure of those neighbors themselves changed? Or was it due to the well-known increase in the importance of descent groups in Classicist (Confucian) social thinking that began in the tenth century? As I will show, all three of these changes played a role, but in ways that scramble our usual sense of the metaphorical “Great Wall” between China and the steppe nomads being impermeable to intellectual cross-fertilization.

Ouyang Xiu and His Theory of Barbarian Society

By the time Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修 (1007–1072) was composing his history of the Five Dynasties period, Chinese historians had had over a millennium of experience in describing the peoples around China. Ouyang Xiu has often been read as the archetypal Chinese chauvinist, uninterested in, and giving little usable information on, China's neighbors, particularly the Kitans.¹²

Ouyang Xiu was writing under the Song 宋 dynasty (960–1279) which had completed the extinction of the barbarian Shatuo dynasties that had dominated North China from their base in Shanxi 山西 province during the hundred years or so from 880 to 979. The Song also faced the Kitan Liao dynasty to the north which had manipulated several of the later Shatuo dynasties as puppets while it occupied the sixteen prefectures around present-day Beijing 北京. As one might expect, the Song writers were invested in the idea that the Shatuo had not fulfilled their dynastic task well. Yet Ouyang Xiu and other writers are less critical of the Shatuo dynasties than one might think.

¹² Richard Davis, generally a vigorous promoter of Ouyang Xiu's historical reputation, writes of his account of the barbarians: “Most modern scholars of Inner Asia consider it highly flawed,” on p. lxviii of his introduction to Ouyang Xiu, trans. Davis, *Historical Records of the Five Dynasties*. The title of David Curtis Wright's “The Screed of a Humbled Empire: The *Xin Tangshu*'s Prolegomena on the Turks” is eloquent enough without his description of Ouyang Xiu as a “xenophobe.”

The Shatuo are conventionally treated in Western writings as “Turkic nomads,” although as we will see this is far from the whole story.¹³ Settled in Shanxi for many decades before their rise, they were geographically, at least, within China and in his history, Ouyang Xiu clearly treated the Shatuo states as legitimate Heartland (*Zhongguo* 中國) dynasties in sharp contrast to archetypal barbarian foes, the Kitans. The individual Shatuo rulers may be barbarian in origin and traits; but in comparison to the invading outside Kitans, they were unquestionably men of the Chinese Heartland, and hence relatively worthy of support.¹⁴

As a private historical work, rather than a state-sponsored publication, his *Wudai shiji* 五代史記 or *Historical Records of the Five Dynasties* was where Ouyang Xiu expressed his thinking on history most clearly.¹⁵ By the time he wrote it, China’s experience with non-Chinese people had jelled into a check list of categories which could be used to describe the barbarians, something like those used by G.P. Murdock in his classic 1949 classification of the world’s societies, *Social Structure*. Unfortunately, for the Five Dynasties period, most slots had to be filled in with “not available” or else projected from the better documented Tang period. In writing about the Türks of his time, Ouyang Xiu noted:

As for the Türks (Tujue 突厥), their state territory (*guodi* 國地), hereditary rulers (*junshi* 君世), tribal clans (*buzu*), names and titles (*minghao* 名號), and products and customs can all be seen in the Tang records.¹⁶

An identical list of potential topics for study is found for the Tibetans further on in the page.

For people without a unified kingdom and hence without state territory, somewhat different categories were substituted – but the *buzu* or “tribal

¹³ For the conventional view, see the chapter “The Sha-t’o and Their Culture” in Eberhard, *Conquerors and Rulers*: 140–156.

¹⁴ Compare for example, *XWDS*, 6/66 (Ouyang/Davis, *HRFD*: 63), where the Emperor Tang Mingzong 唐明宗 laments that he is a barbarian (*fanren* 蕃人), with *XWDS*, 47/528 (Ouyang/Davis, *HRFD*: 396) where the struggle waged by his official Zhang Xichong 張希崇, and his mostly Shatuo troops against the Kitans is one between Han Chinese (*han* 漢) and barbarian (*lu* 虜). *Fan* is a relatively neutral term for non-Han or non-Chinese; *lu* (sometimes translated “caitiff”) is a highly derogatory term used only for barbarians not under the rule of the dynasty.

¹⁵ This work is usually known by its informal title as the *Xin Wudaishi* 新五代史 “New History of the Five Dynasties,” in contrast to the previous (*Jiu*) *Wudaishi* 舊五代史 “(Old) History of the Five Dynasties,” which Ouyang Xiu used as a source.

¹⁶ *XWDS*, 74/913.

clans" still appeared as the natural sub-unit of any barbarian people. About the Tatars (Dada 達靼) he wrote:

By custom they are good at mounted archery; their livestock is rich in camels and horses. The names of their lords (*junzhang* 君長) and tribal clans (*buzu*) cannot be researched; we can only find their occasional communications with China to speak about.¹⁷

A similar confession of ignorance comes with regard to the Amur River Markat (*Heishui Mohe* 黑水靺鞨): "Yet the historians failed to record any of their tribal clans (*buzu*), hereditary successions (*shici* 世次), or rises and falls (*lizu* 立卒)."¹⁸

Evidently, by the middle of the eleventh century, when Ouyang Xiu was writing, it was accepted that barbarian peoples were all divided into *buzu* or tribes. This was so whether they were politically unified like the Tang-era Türks and Tibetans or the Five Dynasties-era Kitans or else disunited like the Tatars and Amur River Markat. That Ouyang Xiu so consistently uses the term *buzu*, the binome combining *bu*, "a group of people following one leader," and *zu*, a "descent group" or "clan," might seem to indicate that he believed that corporate kin groups or descent were particularly characteristic of the barbarians.

Nothing could be farther from the truth, however. For Ouyang Xiu, what distinguished barbarian society from Chinese was exactly the opposite: political leadership *without* multi-generational descent groups. This viewpoint he sets forth at the beginning of his first chapter on the "Appendix on the Barbarians in the Four Directions":

We Lament: As the barbarians make their dwelling place and eat and drink, they follow the water and grass and migrate according to the heat and cold. They have leaders and tribal names but are without any lasting descent groups (*shizu* 世族)¹⁹ or distinct written records, so when it comes to the weak and the strong consuming each other with their twanging bows and poisoned arrows and the varying sizes of their countries and the instability of the rise and fall, how could there be adequate basis to

¹⁷ XWDS, 74/911.

¹⁸ XWDS, 74/920. Markat/Mohe is a later transcription of the name Wuji/Mut-ki~Mur-ki 勿吉, which corresponds to the Greek Moukri, the Old Turkic Bükli, and Tibetan (derived from Old Turkic) Mug-lig. These four versions can be explained as resulting from an original designation as Murki, which by metathesis became Mukri and then Bukli in Old Turkic to avoid the prohibited syllable-initial m- and r-. Markat would then be a plural in -t of this term.

¹⁹ The first character in this *shizu* 世族 differs from that in *shizu* 氏族 above, and rather emphasizes their multi-generational character.

investigate any of this? Only their coming and going in submission and rebellion and their ability to be of service or harm to the Heartland – this cannot be left unstudied.²⁰

Here Ouyang Xiu is speaking only of those outside the Heartland (*Zhong-guo*), that is the land ruled from the North China plain. The dynasties founded by the Shatuo people in North China are not included in these chapters; indeed Shatuo officials and commanders curse the Kitans many times in the pages of his history as barbarians.

Yet Ouyang Xiu extended his analysis of the absence of lasting, corporate kin groups among the barbarians to the ancestors of the Shatuo dynasties themselves that dominated much of the Five Dynasties. On this basis, he criticized previous histories which had erroneously treated the Shatuo as having a long traceable past. The first Shatuo dynasty, the Latter Tang 後唐 (923–937), was founded by Li Keyong and his son Li Cunxu 李存勖, the Zhuangzong 莊宗 Emperor (886–926). The imperial family had received the Tang imperial surname of Li, but was of Turkic origin; according to the official account, they were originally surnamed Zhuxie 朱邪²¹ and traced their origin to the Barköl region of modern Xinjiang beyond the northwest frontier. Ouyang Xiu cites a previous history (exactly which history this is will be discussed later) which had described the origins of the first Shatuo dynasty in a way that treated them as a long lasting hereditary family:

²⁰ XWDS, 72/885.

²¹ Zhuxie 朱邪 (Old Mandarin *chu-zia*) alternates with Zhuye 朱耶 (Old Mandarin *chu-yia*) in all the major sources. As a result, scholars have preferred the *ye* reading of the 邪 character, which makes the two forms of the name homophonous. This *ye* reading has further been encouraged by the undoubted historical link between the Zhuxie ~ Zhuye and the Chuyue/Chong'al 處月 people. In the Tang era, however, the *ye* pronunciation of 邪 and that of *yue* 月 were pronounced very differently: *yia* and *ngüat*. (Here and elsewhere Old Mandarin pronunciations are adapted from Pulleyblank, *Lexicon of Reconstructed Pronunciation*. Thus while the Zhuxie were undoubtedly connected in some way to the Chuyue, Zhuxie/Chuzia and Chuyue/Chong'al cannot be the same name. I believe this people must be linked rather with the Zhusi/Chuz 朱斯 of XTS, 215A/6048 which in turn is certainly the same as the Chisi/Ch'iz 熾俟 of XTS, 217B/6143, *THY*, 100/1787, etc. Such a link in turn demands the reading Zhuxie/Chuzia. The prevalence of the 邪 character for Zhuxie in the sources edited by Ouyang Xiu in contrast to the 耶 found more often in other sources has been attributed to Ouyang Xiu's prejudicial editing (in that reading the character has the meaning of "perverted, heterodox"). Yet it is also the fact that the accuracy of Ouyang Xiu's textual transmission is far superior to that of the older Tang and Five Dynasties histories, and that the latter was subject under the Qing to specifically *anti*-prejudicial re-editing. For this reason I believe 朱耶 to be an incorrect reading.

The Shatuo/Sandy Slopes is the barren wastelands of Beiting 北庭.²² Under the Taizong 太宗 Emperor of the Tang, the divisions of the Türks were broken up and the Tong'ra 同羅 and Pughur 僕骨²³ were resettled across these wastelands and the Shatuo area command set up with their primordial ancestor Bayarghu 拔野古 as area-commander. His sons and grandsons who succeeded him served for several generations as the Shatuo area commanders, as a result of which subsequent generations came to call themselves "Shatuo."²⁴

According to this account, the dynastic ancestors were a localized surname, producing servants of the Tang dynasty for five generations. They thus paralleled the role of hereditary office-holding families in China proper, producing able vassals to serve the empire generation after generation.

In his own account of the origin of the Shatuo dynasty which Ouyang Xiu puts in the Basic Annals of his *Historical Records of the Five Dynasties*, he rejects this whole picture of a long-standing barbarian descent group. Instead he claims that only in the time of Zhuxie Jinzhong 朱邪盡忠, who moved into China proper, did they begin using Shatuo as their "tribe" name and Zhuxie as their surname:

His ancestors were originally called the Zhuxie and originated among the Western Türks. By the time of their later descendants, they had come to call themselves the Shatuo/Sandy Slopes, while using Zhuxie as their surname.

²² Beiting is Besh-Balīq near modern Qitai 奇台, northeast of Ürümchi in Xinjiang 新疆.

²³ Following Haussig, I identify the Chinese *Pugu* with the name attested in Syriac as *Pugurâyê* and in Sogdian as *pwγ'r*; see Dickens, "Turkâyê: Turkic Peoples in Syriac Literature": 141, 150.

²⁴ *XWDS*, 4/39; Ouyang/Davis, *HRFD*: 39. This account is derived from a *zixu* 自序, "author's preface." As I argue below, it is likely to be a citation from the preface to the Veritable Records of the Latter Tang dynasty. The text in the *JWDS*, 25/331 is similar but phrased somewhat differently: "The Great Ancestor, the Conquering Emperor, had the personal name Keyong. Originally he was of the Zhuxie surname (*ben xing Zhuxie shi* 本姓朱耶氏). His ancestors were men of Jincheng 金城 in the Longyou 隴右 Route. His first ancestor Baya 拔野 was made the Moli 墨離 Military Commander during the Zhenguan 貞觀 years [627–649] and participated in the Taizong Emperor's attack on Koguryō 高麗 ... The Taizong Emperor having pacified the divisions of the Ser-Yian[da] 薛延, protectorates were established in Anxi 安西 and Beiting to administer them. They were divided into Tongra and Pughur and the Shatuo/Sandy Slopes Area Command was established there. Now the Beiting area is a barren land, which was the reason why the name Shatuo/Sandy Slopes was used there. In the Yonghui 永徽 years [650–655], Baya was made area commander, and subsequently his sons and grandsons inherited the position for five generations."

At the time of the Dezong 德宗 Emperor of the Tang [780–804], there was one Zhuxie Jinzhong living in Jinmanzhou 金滿洲 Prefecture in the Beiting area.²⁵

In his commentary on this chapter of the Basic Annals, Ouyang Xiu expanded on his reason for rejecting the previous account of the Shatuo origins:

As I have examined the biographies and annals, their theories are all contradictory. The barbarians have no surnames (*xingshi* 姓氏); Zhuxie is merely the designation of a tribal clan (*buzi*). The Bayarghu were men of the same period as the Zhuxie and were not their primordial ancestor, and in the time of Tang Taizong [627–649] there as yet was no Shatuo Prefecture.²⁶

After explaining how the Tong'ra and Pughur were merely small divisions of the Turkic Tegregs 鐵勒, Xue-Yantuo/Ser-Yianda 薛延陀, and Ashina 阿史那, and how the Chong'al²⁷ 處月 and Chomil 處密 in turn were merely small division of them, he then comes to the point: "The Zhuxie were merely a separate division of the Chong'al." Describing how they appeared and disappeared in the record, he adds:

150 or 160 years later, in the time of the Xianzong 憲宗 Emperor [806–820], one Zhuxie Jinzhong and his son Zhiyi 執宜 appeared in the Heartland, while calling themselves Shatuo and taking Zhuxie as their surname.

Now "Shatuo" (Sandy Slopes) means the vast barren wasteland which is to the south of the Jinsha 金沙 Mountains [modern Gobi-Altai Range] and the east of Pulei 蒲類 Sea [modern Barköl Lake]. Since the Chong'al had come to dwell there, they were called the Shatuo/Sandy Slope Türks. But since the barbarians do not have a script to record things for the future, and the Zhuxie were too small to be worth notice, therefore their subsequent generations lost their traditions. When the [Tang dynasty] Li 李 surname was conferred on Jinzhong's grandson, the Li family began to be important, and the barbarian people came to consider the Shatuo as of noble stock.²⁸

²⁵ XWDS, 4/31; Ouyang/Davis, *HRFD*: 29.

²⁶ XWDS, 4/39; Ouyang/Davis, *HRFD*: 39.

²⁷ The Chuyue/Chong'al are usually identified with the Chigil branch of the Oghuz mentioned by Mahmud al-Kashgari. A much closer identification phonetically is, however, with the Chunghyl "bone" found among the Yogurs of Gansu by E.R. Tenishev in 1965; see Tōru Saguchi, "Historical Development of the Sarigh Uy-gurs": 19.

²⁸ XWDS, 4/39–40; Ouyang/Davis, *HRFD*: 39.

Only after they came into contact with the Heartland, the imperial Tang dynasty, and with the written word was Jinzhong's family enabled to have a stable surname (*xing* 姓). In discussing the royal family of the Latter Tang, he links particularly closely the acquisition of a surname with the acquisition of a dynasty:

In the Tang, when the Zhuxie acquired a surname they became the Li family; when they acquired a kingdom they became the Jin 晉; when they acquired the whole world, they became the Tang. Their origin was among the barbarians and their end was in chaos, so their hereditary succession cannot be investigated in detail.²⁹

Here Ouyang Xiu implies that Zhuxie was never even used as a genuine surname. Rather he argues that the Tang's imperial Li surname, given to Zhuxie Chixin as a mark of imperial favor in 869, was the first real surname the dynastic ancestors ever had.³⁰

The lineage of the other prominent Shatuo figures was still less clear. About Emperor Mingzong 明宗 (Li Siyuan 李嗣源, r. 926–933), Li Ke-yong's adopted son, he wrote that he “was by hereditary origin a barbarian and did not have a surname”; the only information on his ancestry he had was that his father Ni 覓 was a general of a unit (or tribe, *bu*) of Yanmen 雁門 in northern Shanxi.³¹ Consort Dowager Madame An 安太妃 is introduced briefly as native to Daibei 代北, i.e., to the lands north of Shanxi where the Shatuo were at home. Ouyang Xiu simply states: “Her ancestry is unknown.”³²

For Ouyang Xiu, the relation of corporate kin groups to literacy and state-building was exactly the opposite of that assumed in nineteenth-century European social science. Strong, multi-generational descent groups depended on the state and written records for their very existence. Building a stable state involved not breaking down long-lasting corporate lineages, but building them up. Another distinctive feature of Ouyang Xiu's view of the “barbarian” as a category was its geographical character. The Central Plain (*zhongyuan* 中原) is the land with the true state, and hence the land with the true multi-generational descent groups. Putting these two claims together, we see that only those barbarians who moved into the Central Plains, like the Shatuo, could acquire the surnames and written records that would give

²⁹ XWDS, 14/149; Ouyang/Davis, *HRFD*: 137.

³⁰ XWDS, 4/31; Ouyang/Davis, *HRFD*: 29–30.

³¹ XWDS, 6/53; Ouyang/Davis, *HRFD*: 51.

³² XWDS, 17/180; Ouyang/Davis, *HRFD*: 167. The similar entry in the reconstructed Qing text of the *JWDS* (86/1133) was evidently taken from the *XWDS*.

them the stable descent groups, that would give them a shot at developing civilized government. Those who remained outside the Central Plains, like the Kitans, could not.

Ouyang Xiu, as is well-known, was an early proponent of the genealogical revival under the Northern Song (960–1127), a revival which eventually led under subsequent dynasties into a centuries-long effort in China to build up corporate kin groups. His genealogy, composed in 1055, became one of the early landmarks in the new promotion of descent group consciousness. Unlike genealogies in the Southern Song and later periods, however, Ouyang Xiu's genealogy was relatively shallow (only five generations deep) and focused on describing the official achievements of the persons listed. For Ouyang Xiu and his colleagues, the significance of the descent group lay in its utility to the state, in its production of sons imbued with the tradition of learning, service, and above all correct moral feeling that came from being a conscious member of a multi-generational family. As Zhang Zai 張載, another pioneer in genealogical study, wrote:

Now that genealogical writing has also decayed, people do not know where they come from; there are no hundred year families ... Moreover, without the establishment of the system of differentiated descent lines, the court can have no hereditary officials. For instance, a minister can rise up in a day from a poor and humble position. If he does not set up a *tsung* [zong 宗] system, once he dies his agnates [zu] will scatter and his house [jia 家] will not continue ... In this way, they cannot preserve their houses, how can they preserve the state?³³

In its Northern Song version, kin-based society was oriented to success and service in the capital, not towards local autonomy.³⁴ To Ouyang Xiu, the great deficiency of the barbarian state, and the source of its instability, was precisely its lack of such stable, multi-generational aristocratic families, and much of his history of the Five Dynasties was focused on pounding home this fact in example after example.

³³ Ebrey, "Early Stages in the Development of Descent Group Organization": 35-39; quotation on pp. 37-38. This concept of the role of genealogy in nourishing service to the state certainly did not disappear and was shared with non-Han officials in later dynasties as well. The Uyghur Sevinch-Qaya 小雲石海涯, in his six-point reform plan presented to the Emperor Ayurbarwada (r. 1311–1320) of the Mongol Yuan dynasty, proposed as point 4: "Publicize surnames in order to bring meritorious descendants to light" (YS, 143/3422).

³⁴ This is the influential Hartwell-Hymes thesis; see Hartwell, "Demographic, Political, and Social Transformations of China, 750–1550," and Hymes, *Statesmen and Gentlemen*.

Ouyang Xiu and Rudi Lindner

Ouyang Xiu's view of nomadic society – although he speaks of *yidi* 夷狄 which is a general term for “barbarians,” his focus is always on the nomads to the north and west – is remarkably similar to that of one eminent modern historian of the Turkic “barbarians,” Rudi Lindner. Critical of the focus on kinship and aiming to reveal the truth about nomadic peoples obscured by sedentary histories, Lindner in his often-cited article “What Was a Nomadic Tribe?”³⁵ argued that contemporary ethnographic studies that focused on kinship were misleading when studying the politically independent nomads of the Middle Ages. Instead he emphasized three aspects: the illiteracy of genuine nomads, the politico-military nature of their organization, and their inherently ephemeral organization. That Lindner saw a society formed of voluntarily recruited war bands as fascinating, while Ouyang Xiu saw it as repulsive, cannot obscure the close similarity of their descriptions.

Lindner begins his paper by arguing that the nomad is by definition illiterate: “Why should mounted archers have preserved archives? Paper, always heavy, would restrict mobility, range, and speed of horses” (p. 690). As we have seen, Ouyang Xiu, too, emphasized how the illiteracy of the barbarians rendered highly suspect the lengthy genealogies which previous sources on the Shatuo dynasts wished to attribute to them. Lindner then argued that the importance of genealogy among modern nomads is a function of their current state of pacification, restriction to limited pastures, and poverty, which renders association with them no longer attractive. By contrast, he argued that the nomadic tribe in its days of victory was an attractive political and military organization that recruited people from all corners: “The medieval Eurasian nomadic tribe was a political organism open to all who were willing to subordinate themselves to its chief and who shared interests with its tribesmen.”³⁶

Lindner concedes, unlike Ouyang Xiu, that tribes, formed on purely political or military basis, did use kinship “to justify and express tribal unity in some symbolic form easily understandable by all the tribespeople.”³⁷ But such justification cast in a kinship idiom could not, in his analysis, conceal the fundamental nature of the medieval nomadic tribe as a voluntary association formed under a single leader for common politico-military interests. At root, then, he agrees with Ouyang Xiu that the nomads “have leaders and tribal names but are without any lasting clans or distinct written records.”

³⁵ Lindner, “What Was a Nomadic Tribe?” This formed the conceptual core of his book, *Nomads and Ottomans in Medieval Anatolia*.

³⁶ Lindner, “What Was a Nomadic Tribe?”: 701.

³⁷ *Ibid.*: 700.

Since a tribe was based on leadership of a voluntarily gathered war band and was not institutionalized in kinship boundaries, Lindner believed that medieval nomadic tribes were fundamentally ephemeral:

Since tribesmen tended to follow that man who best led them, and since for predators the demonstration of military ability normally required the defeat and destruction of one's rivals, there was a cyclical tendency for tribes to break up and reform in every generation as some tribesmen followed one candidate, others another.³⁸

As we have seen, Ouyang Xiu agreed, expressing the same idea more vividly when he wrote: "When it comes to the weak and the strong consuming each other with their twanging bows and poisoned arrows and the varying sizes of their countries and the instability of the rise and fall, how could there be adequate basis to investigate any of this?" One of the fundamental categories he used for studying the barbarians was that of "rise and fall," expressed in various phrases: *xingmie* 興滅 "rise and destruction," *shuai sheng* 衰盛 "declining and flourishing," *lizu* 立卒 "establishment and termination."³⁹ Yet as often as not, he refers to the rises and falls only to confess his inability to document them given their rapid alterations among the barbarians and the absence of written documentation. Like Lindner, he believed that to study the barbarians was to study "flux and movement."⁴⁰

Terminologically, however, Lindner's tribe does not correspond exactly in scale to Ouyang Xiu's *buzu*. For Lindner the "tribe" always refers to the maximal political unit; his chosen examples are the followers of Osman in early Ottoman Turkey and the Huns under Attila, each of which he calls a tribe. For Ouyang Xiu, as for all Chinese authors, the two common terms for barbarian units, *buluo* and *buzu*, are always used for subunits of a larger, named whole. When unified (as with the Kitans, Türks, or Tibetans), then the maximal unit is called a *guo* 國, roughly "kingdom," "fief," "state," or "empire." The *buzu* is always a sub-unit of that larger unit. For disunited peoples, such as the Tatars or Amur River Markat, the *buzus* then are subunits of the whole people in question, even though Ouyang Xiu does not actually use a single classifier term such as *guo* to designate their entirety, only a distinctive ethnonym. This is true for classical Chinese writers generally, who never use *buluo* or *buzu* to describe maximal political units or ethnic groups as a whole, but only subunits thereof. Yet the difference does not extend much beyond terminology. As we have seen Ouyang Xiu found the history of the *buzus* or sub-units to be impossible to study, at least for

³⁸ Lindner, "What Was a Nomadic Tribe?": 705.

³⁹ *XWDS*, *xingmie*: 72/885, *shuaisheng*: 72/885, *lizu*: 74/916, 74/920 (twice).

⁴⁰ Lindner, "What Was a Nomadic Tribe?": 695.

the Five Dynasties period, and so in practice he, like Lindner, focused purely on the rise and fall of the maximal political unit.

Lindner's focus on the maximal political unit (whether one calls it a tribe or not) likewise led him to focus purely on flux and change in nomadic society. As I have argued elsewhere, the Mongols, wherever documented, have been organized into what we can call appanage communities, usually numbering from the several hundred to several thousand households in size, and which show considerable continuity (on the order of one or two centuries).⁴¹ Similarly, one can find the units of analogous size and continuity mentioned among the Xiongnu, and listed as "arrows" or "surnames" among the Türk realms of the early and mid-Tang.⁴² Moreover, as Thomas Barfield has pointed out, nomadic ruling families such as the Luanti ~ Xulianti 纥纁 ~ 虛連題 family of the Xiongnu, have often had a remarkably long-lasting grip on power.⁴³ Barfield's under-appreciated insight can also apply to the Ashina and Yaghlaqar families of the Türk and Uyghur empires, and the Borjigid ~ Kiyad family of Chinggis Khan and his descendants, all of which dominated the steppe in one form or another for centuries.⁴⁴ Thus at the level of both territorial sub-units and ruling families, nomadic societies are characterized not by instability but stability. Lacking data on the territorial sub-units and convinced that barbarians cannot have long-lasting descent groups, Ouyang Xiu, like Rudi Lindner, was unable to see this stability.

The Shatuo Dynastic Conception

The similarity of Ouyang Xiu's conception of barbarian society to that of Rudi Lindner's points up its polemical purpose. Just as Rudi Lindner was arguing against the emphasis on genealogy and kinship structure in the anthropology of nomads, so Ouyang Xiu was arguing against the Shatuo's dynastic history of themselves. This dynastic history is attested today in Song works on the Shatuo dynasties, and in particularly on the Latter Tang dynasty: the *Wudai huiyao* 五代會要 ("Important Documents of the Five Dy-

⁴¹ Atwood, "Mongol Society's Basic Unit: What It Was and Wasn't."

⁴² Atwood, "Clansmen from the Barbarian Tribes: Can We Actually Find Them North of China?"

⁴³ Barfield, *The Perilous Frontier*: 12.

⁴⁴ Counting the Khazars and Qarluqs rulers who were most likely of Ashina descent, the dynasty remained a power in Central Eurasia for almost four hundred years; see Golden, "The Türk Imperial Tradition in the pre-Chinggisid Period": 27, 29. The Yaghlaqar ruling lineage is still found among the Turkic-speaking Yogurs of Gansu province; see Tōru Saguchi, "Historical Development of the Sarigh Uyghurs": 18-20.

nasties”) and the *Jiu Wudaishi* (“Old History of the Five Dynasties”). References within those works indicate that this dynastic legend was first canonized in the imperial temple of the Shatuo’s Latter Tang dynasty.

In the *Wudai huiyao*, it is recorded that when Zhuxie Zhiyi was given the posthumous temple name of Yizu 懿族 (“Virtuous Founder”) in Tongguang 同光 1/923, he was specifically identified as the sixth-generation descendant of Bayarghu.⁴⁵ This claim of Bayarghu as the Shatuo’s distant ancestor is exactly the point which Ouyang Xiu disputed. Thus the account which Ouyang Xiu was criticizing turns out to be the official account of the Latter Tang emperors on their own origin. Ouyang Xiu designates the source of the quotation which he criticizes as a *zixu* 自序 or “author’s preface.” The cited text covers exactly the same ground as that in the Basic Annals of the *Jiu Wudaishi*, but is phrased somewhat differently. One may hypothesize then that the “author’s preface” in question was that of the Veritable Records or *shilu* 實錄 of Zhuangzong of the Latter Tang, compiled in 929, which would have served as the source for the *Jiu Wudaishi*.⁴⁶ In any case, the idea of the Latter Tang’s Li dynasty being only the culminating branch of a multi-generational non-Chinese office-holding lineage surnamed Zhuxie and stemming from Bayarghu was something the Shatuo’s Latter Tang dynasty promoted as its own view of history.

Moreover it was this attempt of the Shatuo dynasts to assimilate their own Zhuxie ancestry to the Chinese idea of multi-generational corporate lineage of officials that appears to be the context in which the binome *buzu*, the classic “tribe” in late imperial China, was formed. The earliest use of the binome is in the biographies of the [*Jiu*] *Tangshu* 舊唐書 “[Old] Tang History,” the compilation of which was begun during the Latter Tang in 933 and completed in 945 under the succeeding Latter Jin 晉 dynasty.⁴⁷ However, as is usual in Chinese histories, the terminology of the text largely reflects the documents from which it was drawn, which in this case date from the ninth century. The *Jiu Tangshu*’s sources on foreign peoples are largely drawn from Du You’s 杜佑 *Tongdian* 通典 (801), and *Huiyao* 會要 (ca. 805) and *Xu huiyao* 續會要 (853).⁴⁸ Shouldn’t then the ninth century, when the Tang was in decline, be the era when the term was coined? Almost certainly not. In none of the material specifically traceable to the above-mentioned sources do we find the term *buzu*. Likewise other ninth-century writings on

⁴⁵ *WDHY*, 1/8; cf. the citation in Sima Guang, *Zizhi tongjian*: 272/8879.

⁴⁶ Wang Gung-wu, “The *Chiu Wu-tai shih* and History-Writing”: 10-12.

⁴⁷ Twitchett, *Writing of Official History*: 191-197.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*: 104-113. The *Huiyao* and *Xu huiyao* are preserved today only in the *Tang huiyao* 唐會要 of Wang Pu 王溥, presented to the Song throne in 961.

border issues know nothing of the term. For example, the numerous memorials and decrees written by Li Deyu 李德裕 (787–850) on the frontier issue use *buluo* “local followings,” *zhubu* 諸部 “units,” *buxia* 部下, or *buwu* 部伍 or units in the military sense, *zhong* 種 “race, stock,” or *zu* “clan,” but never *buzu*.⁴⁹ For a unified polity, such as the Uyghurs, sub-units were not normally referred to at all, only the *guo* or “state.”⁵⁰ Official ninth-century Tang usage thus does not look like the milieu in which the binome *buzu* originated.

All the evidence indicates that the term *buzu* was coined among the ruling milieu of Li family Shatuo, who eventually proclaimed the Latter Tang (923–937), the first dynasty of Shatuo origin. In the only lightly edited documents of the *Jiu Wudaishi* or “(Old) History of Five Dynasties” from which Ouyang Xiu had compiled his *Historical Records of the Five Dynasties*, we find the term nowhere used in the records of the Latter Tang’s Chinese predecessor dynasty, the Liang. In the records of the Latter Tang on, however, it is used for the Kitans, for the Tatars, for the Dangxiang 党项 (Miñag or Tanguts), for unspecified Kökenuur area barbarians, and the northern barbarians in general.⁵¹ The Latter Tang editors of the *Jiu Tangshu* also wrote this term into their accounts of the Tang-era barbarians in a few places. It is used twice in the *Jiu Tangshu* in the historians’ commentary on the history of the Tang, compiled under the Latter Tang. Once, the editors explain the fall of ‘Il Qaghan⁵² (r. 620–630), last ruler of the First Türk

⁴⁹ See for example, the following pages in Li Deyu, *Li Weigong huichang yipin ji*, with references to Drompp, *Tang China and the Collapse of the Uighur Empire*, in parentheses: *buluo*: 13/1a (p. 217), 5/3b (p. 238), 13/7a (p. 239), 13/10b (p. 247); *zhubu*: 5/7a (p. 215), 5/8a (p. 222); *buxia*: 5/8a (p. 216); *buwu*: 5/2b (p. 230); *benbu* 本部: 5/1a (p. 227); *xiao zazhong* 小雜種 (“petty mongrel tribes”): 5/1b (p. 229), *wu zu* 五族 “five clans” (of the Qirghiz): 5/7b (p. 215), etc.

⁵⁰ Michael Drompp, e-mail message to author, September 12, 2007.

⁵¹ Kitans: *JWDS*, 26/360, 48/664, 96/1278, 103/1375, 137/1827; Tatars: 32/448, 47/652; Dangxiang or Miñag: 125/1645, 132/1748; Kökenuur-area barbarians (*fan* 蕃): 80/1051; northern barbarians in general: 70/932, 89/1165.

⁵² Chinese Xieli Kehan 頡利可汗. Given the absence of a final -k in the *li* of Xieli, I find the common identification of Xieli with Illig quite impossible. In Tang era transcriptions single syllables with a final consonant are often transcribed by two characters. I use the apostrophe ‘ to mark the obscure phoneme represented by the initial x ~ gh in so many Chinese transcriptions of Old Turkic names and titles. In the Bac-trian documents of the seventh century edited by Nicholas Simms-Williams we see this phoneme transcribed as H-.

Empire, by citing conflict among the *buzu*, and once they describe the multiplicity of *buzu* among the Qiang 羌 and Di 氐 on the western frontier.⁵³

Even the use of *buzu* as part of a standard list of information one should have about barbarians did not begin with Ouyang Xiu. Hu Jiao 胡嶠, who served as a secretary for the Kitan commander Xiao Han 蕭翰 (d. 948), and whose account Ouyang Xiu cited at length, has a list of the sort of things one should know about barbarians:

There was no translator for their language, so I could not learn about their state territory (*guodi*), mountains and rivers, tribal clans (*buzu*), or names and titles (*minghao*). As for their climate, when we were in the lowlands it was mild and temperate, but in the mountain forests it was cold and clear.⁵⁴

It is not unlikely that Ouyang Xiu adopted this list, written by an observer he respected enough to quote at length, as the model for his own “checklist” approach to what one needs to know about barbarians.

What was the reason for the creation of this term *buzu* at the court of the Shatuo rulers? Extant usage of the term in the texts on Five Dynasties history is mostly restricted to the description of the outer barbarians, but it seems hard to believe that the Latter Tang court writers were concerned enough about the social structure of barbarians outside the Heartland to invent a special term for their social units. Although *buzu* is never used for the Shatuo themselves in Ouyang Xiu’s writings, certain passages in the older history of the Five Dynasties raise the possibility that the binome *buzu* was coined as a way to describe the adherents to the Shatuo cause in a respectably kin-based way. In a description of three *timens* (ten thousands) of Tatars joining the Shatuo cause, dated to Tongguang 3/925, the surrendered Tatar leader Yuyue 于越 is described as a *zuzhang* 族長 “clan head” and his followers are described as a *buzu* with their sheep and horses.⁵⁵ As will be noted below, the Tatars had long been incorporated into the core of the Shatuo fighting forces. Likewise in a memorial of the Latter Jin 晉 dynasty (936–946), the border general An Chongrong 安重榮 describes the Shatuo and the Anqing Nine Offices 安慶九府 “all leading their *buzu*, old and young, with their oxen and goats, wagons and tents, armor and horses” to migrate inward in response to Kitan attacks.⁵⁶ The Anqing Nine Offices was

⁵³ JTS, 194B/5193, 195/5216.

⁵⁴ From Hu Jiao’s lost memoirs *Xian beilu ji* 陷北虜記, as cited in XWDS, 73/908.

⁵⁵ JWDS, 32/448.

⁵⁶ JWDS, 98/1302; XWDS, 51/584 (Ouyang/Davis, *HRFD*: 420); Ouyang Xiu here replaced *buzu* with *zu*. This change could be for purely stylistic reasons, but it is worth noting that this is the one place where *buzu* is used of the Shatuo themselves in the

the designation of a Sogdian group that had joined the Shatuo in the eighth century and was ruled by the Shi family, the imperial family of the Jin 晉 itself. In other words, the term *buzu* in this case is being used for the core people of the Shatuo dynasties.

Likewise in the *Jiu Tangshu*, edited under the Latter Tang and Jin 晉, we find the term *buzu* used in certain biographies, but only those relating to the rise of the Shatuo. The biography of Zheng Zongdang 鄭從讜 mentions the rise of the Shatuo founder thus:

In the Qianfu period [874–879], bandits arose in Henan, and the whole society was in tumult. The *buzu* of Li Guochang 李國昌 [a.k.a. Zhuxie Chixin 朱邪赤心, Li Keyong's father], the Shatuo Area Commander of the Yinshan 陰山 Prefecture, was strong just then, and laid an ambitious gaze on the northern frontier.⁵⁷

Likewise the biography of Li Deyu in the *Jiu Tangshu* uses the term *buzu*, once to refer to the Uyghurs breaking up and then with regard to the consequent rise of the *buzu* of Zhuxie Chixin/Li Guochang:

At the end of the Kaicheng years 開成 [836–840], the Uyghurs 迴紇 had been attacked by the Qirghiz 黠戛斯 and were defeated in battle. The *buzus* scattered.⁵⁸

Suddenly the Uyghur's grand councillor Ormizt 𐰽𐰺𐰍𐰆𐰏𐰤 killed grand councillor [Zhuxie] Chixin, and with that as justification came to surrender. Chixin's *buzu* also surrendered in Youzhou 幽州.⁵⁹

As was mentioned above, we know that in his own works Li Deyu did not use the term *buzu*. It seems hardly a coincidence that we find the earliest uses of *buzu* in frontier narratives clustering around the stories touching on the Shatuo rise.

Presumably these biographies were based, at least in part, on Shatuo-era accounts of the dynastic founding and hence incorporated Shatuo-era terminology. Direct documentation is lacking but it seems plausible to connect the use of the term *buzu* with the Shatuo Zhuxie dynasty's efforts to envis-

Jiu Wudai shi. By changing it, Ouyang Xiu eliminates one of the few instances of *buzu* being used for the Shatuo themselves, thus making it a phrase applicable purely to people outside the heartland. It should be noted that Anqing and Jiufu are a single name; Davis mistakenly translates them as "Shatuo, Anqing, and Jiufu tribes."

⁵⁷ *JTS*, 158/4169.

⁵⁸ *JTS*, 174/4521. This passage is parallel to that in *JWDS*, 138/1841 in the biography of the Uyghurs, making it still more likely that it was inserted as a parenthetical explanation by the Latter Tang editors.

⁵⁹ *JTS*, 174/4522.

age their own history as something analogous to one of the ancient office-holding families of China, only beyond the frontier. The term was then extended to the newer adherents of the imperial clan, such as the Anqing and the Tatars, who were also reconceived of as *buzu*, that is, multi-generational office holding clans, just like those of China, but of barbarian origin and greater size and political significance.

The idea of legitimating a barbarian dynasty by a long ancestry outside of China dated back to Wei Shou's 魏收 *Weishu* 魏書 (CE 553), the first surviving history of a non-Han dynasty written in Chinese by one of that dynasty's own subjects. There too as with the account of the Zhuxie dynasty's ancestry, the long genealogy undoubtedly derived from the rulers' own account of their pre-dynastic history. Although their customs were "pure and unsophisticated" and their culture "plain and simple," still, wrote Wei Shou, "details of both the recent and remote past were passed down by word of mouth just as those which historians record are written down."⁶⁰ The implication is, of course, that the genealogy given in the histories, which went back to the Yellow Emperor, was still reliable despite the absence of written records.

The emphasis of the Zhuxie on their Türk ancestry was probably a response to the extreme heterogeneity of the Shatuo, within which Iranian (Hu 胡) elements actually predominated, in numbers if not in status. Edwin Pulleyblank has demonstrated that at least two of the three known divisions or *buluo* of the Shatuo people came from the Tang-era Six Prefectures of Sogdians who lived in Ordos as herders. Only the Zhuxie, whose dominant Li family formed the first Shatuo dynasty were in origin a branch of the Western Türks, while the Mi 米 surname which dominated the Saqal⁶¹ division and the Shi 石 surname which ruled the Anqing 安慶 divisions were both of Sogdian origin.⁶² Thus we read that a commander saw a man with deep eyes and a beard – classic Middle Eastern features from the Chinese perspective – and instantly takes him to be a Shatuo soldier.⁶³ In building up his follow-

⁶⁰ WS, 1/1; cf. Holmgren, *Annals of Tai*: 51.

⁶¹ Chinese *sage/satkat* 薩葛. Pulleyblank, "A Sogdian Colony in Inner Mongolia": 343-344 identifies this term with *xuege/siatkat* 薛葛, and *suoge/sakkat* 索葛. The latter is certainly identical with *suoge/sakkat* 娑葛, which the Tang institutional historian Du You defines in his *Tongdian*, 197/5403 as a Turkish word meaning "hair." Given that etymology it obviously indicates the known Old Turkish *saqal* "beard."

⁶² Pulleyblank, "A Sogdian Colony in Inner Mongolia": 342-347.

⁶³ XWDS, 43/467; Ouyang/Davis, *HRFD*: 383. The cliché of "deep eyes and flourishing beard" (*SJ*, 123/3174; Sima/Watson, *Records of the Grand Historian: Han Dynasty*: vol. 2, p. 245) goes back to a description of the people from Dayuan (Ferghana) to Anxi (Parthia).

ing, Li Keyong, the founder of the Shatuo fortunes, further added a melange of Tatar and Tuhun 吐浑 (Tuguhun 吐谷浑) volunteers.⁶⁴

From the little we know of them, this composite Shatuo people had long experience with giving political significance to ethno-familial terms and vice versa. The term Shatuo "Sandy Slope," which became their ethnonym, stemmed only from the Chinese name of the area command to which the Zhuxie ancestors were assigned by the Tang court and appears to have no indigenous meaning whatsoever. The Sogdians whom the Zhuxie came to rule had previously been known as the "Nine Surname Six Prefecture Sogdians" (*jiuxing liuzhou Hu* 九姓六州胡).⁶⁵ This is the origin of the phrase "the Anqing Nine Surnames" (*Anqing jiuxing* 安慶九姓). By the Five Dynasties period, however, these "Nine Surnames" of the Anqing had become the "Nine Offices" (*jiufu* 九府), a term which historically had referred to the top-echelon agencies in the imperial household establishment.⁶⁶ Eventually, the Anqing's Shi family replaced the Latter Tang's Li surname to establish their own Latter Jin 晉 dynasty. Given the parallels in other Central Eurasian dynasties, it is quite plausible to think that nine (more or less) surnames, i.e., dominant lineages each with their own clients and subjects, might be organized in Chinese fashion into "offices" as the service staff of the emerging imperial household.

What remains obscure is how the term *buzu*, which I hypothesize originated within the ruling circle of the Shatuo, came to be applied so widely to politically independent outsiders. Was the Zhuxie-Li court really interested in rendering respectable not just their own origin and adherents, but also the wider ranks of "barbarian" society, all of who would now be endowed, implicitly if not explicitly, with the kinship structure which writers like Ouyang Xiu would later strive to deny them? The possibility cannot be disproved, but it seems unlikely. A more likely possibility than any concern with "barbarians" in general, may be the temporary alliance of Li Keyong, founder of the kingdom that would become the Latter Tang, with the Kitans. The description of this alliance is also the very earliest use of *buzu* in the imperial basic annals that I have been able to find:

⁶⁴ XWDS, 4/33 (Ouyang/Davis, *HRFD*: 31); XWDS, 74/911. On p. 31, Davis misunderstands the 10,000 soldiers of the Tuhun and Anqing peoples as the Tuhun lead by Anqing. Actually the Anqing were one of the three sub-units of the Shatuo, of Sogdian origin.

⁶⁵ Pulleyblank, "A Sogdian Colony in Inner Mongolia": 343.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*: 344-345; Hucker, *A Dictionary of Official Titles in Imperial China*: nos. 1301.2 and 1317.

In the spring of Tianyou 天祐 2 [905], as Abaoji of the Kitans first began his rise, the Martial Emperor [Li Keyong's posthumous title] summoned him. Abaoji led thirty myriads of his *buzu* to Yunzhou 雲州 and met with the Martial Emperor east of Yunzhou. They shook hands most hospitably and pledged themselves as brothers. The next day, he left, leaving behind 1,000 horses and 10,000 cattle and sheep.⁶⁷

I speculate that during this period of alliance, which lasted for over two decades until Abaoji's death in 926, the term *buzu* was borrowed by the Kitans from the prestigious and centrally located kingdom of Li Keyong. Used for the Kitans, the barbarian people with whom the Shatuo dynasties had the most to do, the term then spread and became popular for all barbarians.

Ironies abound. The idea of "kin-based" society, invented in Europe to explain how such societies were radically different from those of civilized states, was invented in China as a way of showing how barbarian societies were actually quite similar to the civilized empires of China. An historian like Lindner reached his view that barbarians were not organized around kinship by claiming that they were misunderstood by sedentary writers, who ignorantly attributed kinship concerns to nomadic tribes interested only in power and plunder. Ouyang Xiu, however, reached the very same conclusion by attacking a misunderstanding consciously nurtured by a ruler of barbarian origin himself. And finally Ouyang Xiu, who popularized the term *buzu* beyond court circles, was diametrically opposed to the idea behind the creation of the binome in the first place.

The Zhuxie genealogy can thus easily be treated as an "invented tradition," manufactured by status-seeking barbarians aiming to hide the mongrel instability of their warrior band which Lindner would instantly recognize as typical of barbarian states. Such a conclusion would also be too simple, however. Although the actual term *buzu* did not predate the rise of the Shatuo, the Tang literature on the northern Türk and southwestern Nanzhao 南詔 empires shows that this idea of the barbarian sub-units or tribes as kin-based units is neither a simple empirical reality, nor yet an even simpler misunderstanding, but rather part of a complex ideology of rule.

The Tang Transition in Chinese Ethnographic Writing

During the Tang era, Chinese writers first began to write of the barbarians as in some sense societies organized by kin groups.⁶⁸ One can exclude here

⁶⁷ JWDS, 26/360; Ouyang/Davis, *HRFD*: 38. Yunzhou is modern Datong 大同.

⁶⁸ In this section I am summarizing the chapter on the Türks in a large manuscript on the question of tribes and tribalism among the nomads of the Mongolian plateau. A

from consideration the steadily growing number of peoples in southern and eastern border lands who borrowed not just the institution of surnames but the very surnames themselves from China. During the Tang, however, both the Türk nomads in the north and the Yi 彝 and Mosuo 摩梭 peoples of Yunnan 雲南 that made up the Nanzhao kingdom appear in the sources as divided into numbered native surname units: the Nine Surname Oghuz, Twelve Surname Türks, the Six Surnames of the Zhao, the Qiongbu Six Surnames 邛部六姓, and so on. Both the Türk-Uyghur qaghanates and the Yunnan kingdom of Nanzhao were divided into territorial units which were identified in Chinese sometimes as *buluo* "local followings," but more commonly as surnames (*xing*), that is patrilineal-based kin-groups.

This simultaneous appearance of surnames as sub-units of politics in far distant Yunnan and the Türk and Uyghur empires of the Mongolian plateau is a strange coincidence. This coincidence might be explained away by rooting the new terminology in changes in Chinese imperial ethnographic method or in Chinese society internally. In fact, however, in the Türk case, it can be shown fairly decisively that the Chinese fusion of *buluo* "local following" and *xing* "surname" is a translation of the ambiguous, partly kin-based and partly territorial, Türk organization into *bod* (plural *bodun*) or "people." The concept of numbered surnames among the Türks can in turn be dated in East Roman imperial records to the fifth century, well before the earliest attestation of *xing* "surname" as an administrative division of the barbarians around China. Simple one-way change determined solely by developments in China is thus out of the question. Rather it seems to have been a complex process of acculturation between the Tang and the Türk in which the Tang's half-century of rule over the Türks and the integration of the Türk aristocracy into the Tang ruling class both played a part. This understanding then was perhaps extended to the Nanzhao, although examples of confederations of ruling lineages can be found among the southern "savages" (*man* 蠻) well before the Tang.

As found in the famous Old Turkic inscriptions, the oldest indigenous written source from the nomads of Central Eurasia, the significance of the *bod* in the resulting ideology is precisely in calling forth kin-like, filial obligations to an essentially hierarchical and territorial unit. In other words, filiality was the foundation of the Türk order not in the direct sense of its political sub-units having a membership determined by common descent, but rather in the sense of the family being the school for political hierarchy. Whether the ruler of an "arrow" (*oq*) or sub-unit was the literal genealogi-

preliminary version was presented by me in "Clansmen from the Barbarian Tribes: Can We Actually Find Them North of China?"

cal senior of his subjects – and from what we know of Türk organization it is likely that he as a rule was not – he was always the “father” of his subjects. At the same time, membership in the ruling lineage was a crucial mark of status, through which society was divided into “sons” (the ruling lineage) and “subjects” (*tat*) or “slaves” (*qul*; i.e., the commoners). Local lineages were to be nurtured in obedience to the monarch, just as these local lineages’ subjects and clients were nurtured in obedience to them. It was in this context that the Tang court historian Liu Fang 柳芳 (fl. 740–785) could write of the “surnames” of Jiangzuo 江左, i.e., the Lower Yangtze, and Dai-bei, i.e., the Mongolian plateau, as being both alike examples of mismanaged descent groups which thus failed their purpose of strengthening the empire.⁶⁹

This understanding of the *bu* or “tribe” being named after a leading *xing*, and hence, analogically, being properly bound by the spirit of obedience which juniors felt to their seniors, was expressed in the frequent alteration of *buluo* and *xing* to describe the same units. We also find, once with regard to the Türks and once with regard to the Nanzhao, a new binome, *buxing* 部姓 “unit-surname.” This neologism unlike *buzu* did not catch on, and disappeared from the Chinese lexicon.⁷⁰ The appearance of a term like *buxing* before that of *buzu* shows that the appearance of the latter was not simply a whim of the Zhuxie and their apologists, but a particular manifestation in a Chinese idiom of a widespread Turco-Tang intuition about the proper place of kinship in the hierarchy of the empire.

Conclusion

Ouyang Xiu’s rejection of the Five Dynasties culture centered on what he saw as the related corruption in both kinship and state. The prevalence of political adoption (*cixing* 賜姓, i.e., the bestowal of a patron’s surname on his client) subverted the true feeling of kinship in the imperial family which in turn led to a general abandonment of morals in the society as a whole.⁷¹ He found the Latter Tang rulers, despite their barbarian ancestry, certainly preferable to the Han rebels of the Liang and he believed Emperor Mingzong in particular to have been a relatively able and moral ruler. Yet the

⁶⁹ Cited in *XTS*, 199/5679.

⁷⁰ “The Uyghur and Tegreg *buxing*” in *XTS*, 106/4044 (the biography of Cui Dunli 崔敦禮) and once with regard to the *buxing* of the Nanzhao in *XTS*, 220A/6273, in a citation from a letter dated to Zhenyuan 貞元 4/788.

⁷¹ See the comments in *XWDS*, 9/97–98 (Ouyang/Davis, *HRFD*: 89–90), 16/173 (Ouyang/Davis, *HRFD*: 161), and especially 17/187–188 (Ouyang/Davis, *HRFD*: 174–175).

Shatuo dynasts lacked any reliable records of their own family and hence were quite incapable of making up their shortcoming in proper discrimination of familial feelings. It was no coincidence therefore that "their benevolence lacked clarity" and relations between lord and vassal and father and son became ruthless and violent.⁷² In this way he linked two well-known trends in Song thought, the increasing importance of corporate kin groups, and the increasingly categorical rejection of barbarian culture. Unlike the Heartland Chinese, the new consensus went, barbarians had no corporate kin groups and hence had neither orderly families nor orderly states.

Yet the claims of long Shatuo origin and the currency of the term *buzu* attest to quite a different model about barbarian kinship and the state. This view shared many fundamental assumptions with those premised by Ouyang Xiu, assumptions that run squarely contrary to the default assumption of modern social science that kinship ties, at least those beyond the nuclear family, are inherently hostile to the state. Like Ouyang Xiu, they would have found both sinister and absurd the nineteenth-century European contention that corporate kin groups must be broken down if the state wishes to flourish. Yet they also disagreed with Ouyang Xiu's rejection of surname bestowal and his dogma that barbarians can have no kinship. In both of these ways this tradition remained faithful to the Turco-Tang tradition. This alternative tradition was embodied in Kitan Liao governance which continued the practice of bestowing surnames⁷³ and, as we have seen, openly used the *buzu*, literally a "lineage-unit," as an organizational building block of its empire. The heart of the system was a flexible two-way linkage between political subordination, residence, and descent: while a "local following" (*buluo*) under the administration of a single official would normally imply a "family" (*shizu*), and vice versa, the two were analytically separate. Moreover, they were brought into congruence as much by bestowing the leader's surname on the followers as by bringing acknowledged clansmen together. As we have seen among the Shatuo, surnames could be reconceived as offices and vice versa. Likewise among the Kitans there were no fixed surnames (*xing*), with the exception of the imperial Yelü 耶律 surname and the consort surname Xiao 蕭 (i.e., Shimo 石抹). When one minister suggested that the existing list of them recorded by the founding emperor be made le-

⁷² XWDS, 6/66-67 (Ouyang/Davis, *HRFD*: 63-64).

⁷³ Holmgren, "Imperial Marriage in the Native Chinese and Non-Han State, Han to Ming": 81. For examples, see *LS*, 15/182 n. 19, 82/1289 (bestowing the imperial Yelü surname), 67/1027 (bestowing the consort's Xiao surname), 72/1210 (bestowing the Dongdan surname).

gally, the memorial was rejected, with the reason given that the “old system could not be suddenly reformed.”⁷⁴

Of course, just like the descent-group ideal of Ouyang Xiu and other writers of the Neo-Confucian revival, the organization by *buzu* was as much or more a model for imperial society as it was a description of it. This model is not as well known as the Neo-Confucian model of clan-building due to its location at the courts and among barbarians, rather than among the provincial literati. Yet it was at the courts where most of the deeper thinking about China’s neighbors took place, and also where we find most of the interchange between the Chinese and non-Chinese world. It is thus at court and among the writers there where we find the real innovations in Chinese ethnographic understanding. The progress of such thought during the seminal years of the tenth and eleventh centuries is an important topic for research in both Chinese and Inner Asian history.

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Abbreviations

<i>HRFD</i>	<i>Historical Records of the Five Dynasties</i>
<i>JTS</i>	<i>Jiu Tangshu</i> 舊唐書
<i>JWDS</i>	<i>Jiu Wudaishi</i> 舊五代史
<i>LS</i>	<i>Liaoshi</i> 遼史
<i>SJ</i>	<i>Shiji</i> 史記
<i>THY</i>	<i>Tang huiyao</i> 唐會要
<i>WDHY</i>	<i>Wudai huiyao</i> 五代會要
<i>WS</i>	<i>Weishu</i> 魏書
<i>XTS</i>	<i>Xin Tangshu</i> 新唐書
<i>XWDS</i>	<i>Xin Wudaishi</i> 新五代史
<i>YS</i>	<i>Yuanshi</i> 元史

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⁷⁴ Wittfogel and Fêng, *History of Chinese Society*: 202-212, 264; cf. *LS*, 89/1350.

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